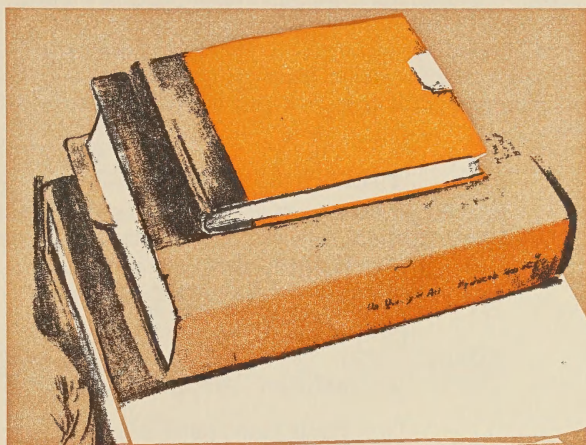


# The Book Club of California Quarterly News-Letter

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Elected to Membership

Founded in 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit organization of book lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to 1,000 members. When vacancies exist, membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues. Dues date from the month of the member's election. Regular membership is \$55; Sustaining \$75; Patron \$150.

Members receive the *Quarterly News-Letter* and all parts of the current Keepsake series. They have the privilege, but not the obligation, of buying Club publications, which are limited, as a rule, to one copy per member. Members may purchase extra copies of Keepsakes or News-Letters, when available. Membership dues (less \$17.50 in each membership category) and donations, including books, are deductible in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code.

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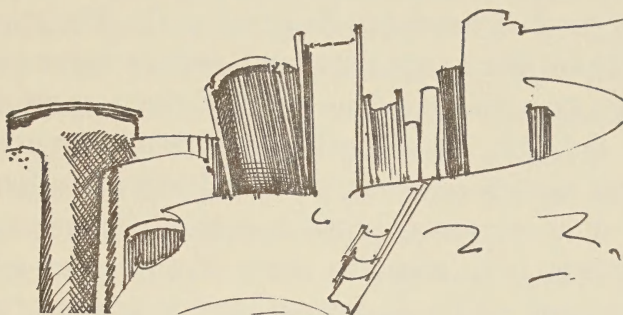
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## Artists' Books:

### Some Remarks on a Legacy of Problems

By Joseph Goldyne

For a kid passionate about art, discovering in adolescence that there were actually books that contained original works of graphic art by admired painters was a profound revelation, akin perhaps to early erotic experience: "Oh, what have we here?" That such wonders did not similarly seduce my friends was a finding of almost equal moment, but a discouraging discovery, more like the reality check commanded by the less desirable signs of aging. Yet there it was before me, continually: baffling indifference which, as yet, has failed to evolve into a more significant receptivity. I was far too insular to fully appreciate how pervasive was the threat of the diminishing audience for many art forms. Acknowledgment of this waning audience and fear of its impact are now expressed with increasing regularity, such as in the 1998 book *Who Killed Homer?* by Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath and in David Remnick's recent appreciative note in the *New Yorker* on the late critic and "exemplar of reading," Alfred Kazin.



As an artist, I was in my early forties before I came to participate in making a book (I had always presumed it was something that you had to wait to be asked to do, like applying for membership in some august society), and my subsequent book making has occurred at a time of somewhat unsettling consequence in the evolution of the "livre d'artiste." Not unexpectedly, there are matters of concern to the devotee of artist's books which are quite relevant to books in general. The reason for this note, however, is to consider some of the issues relevant to artists and printers who do or would love to do books which are works of art.

Like printers, artists have been going broke for centuries laboring to produce results that variously entertained and elevated the reader who wanted a visual as well as textual experience. To be sure, the conflict of natures often characteristic respectively of artists and printers has not infrequently compro-

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mised both teamwork and deadlines, but at century's end there are a host of other issues with which to be concerned. As a California artist, my observation is that the principal problems associated with "books as and/or with art" in the far west are unimaginative production and waning patronage. Of course, the latter concern now pervades many areas of artistic endeavor, but uninspired efforts can be a particular danger for a region rich in private presses, but poor in patronage.

When hand printing was the only game in town, as it was for most of the centuries after Gutenberg, it was not so necessary to stress the need for a constantly vital approach to the job. Pictures in books could make them more salable, but also more expensive. How good the images and how well integrated to text and pictures were simply not the pivotal matters that they became as a greater range of reproductive techniques and printing technologies gave the public more purchasing choices. In those earlier books which called for extra-typographic, pictorial, embellishment, such embellishment was understood as accompaniment, and spaces were allotted for its inclusion. With the advent of the "livre d'artiste" toward the end of the last century, however, the artist was transformed from accompanist to soloist, the book often conceived as a vehicle for those images which decorated its pages.

To be sure, illustrated books of unique stature such as Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* of 1745 with plates by G.B. Piazzetta or Gustave Doré's masterful accompaniment for Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* of 1876 were characterized by aesthetic commitment and incredible financial risk. As an example, Doré himself published the Coleridge work and paid £3,500 to engrave and print the plates. It failed to sell in any meaningful way, though it stands as one of his more remarkable achievements. In many respects the greatest English color-plate book



of the eighteenth century, the brilliantly conceived and beautifully executed *Flora* (1799-1807) by Dr. Robert John Thornton resulted in Thornton's ruin. In our own time, many copies of Jasper Johns's and Samuel Beckett's collaboration on *Foirades/Fizzles* (Petersburg Press, 1976), commonly hailed as the major American "livre d'artiste," and a production to which an entire documentary coffee-table book has been devoted, was still available from the publisher more than ten years after its publication. The same has been true of too many ambitious and aesthetically successful book projects for too many centuries not to make one exceedingly wary of undertaking such efforts.

If not prepared to team up for the full-blown "livre d'artiste," what about just doing the book yourself, what we would now refer to as the "artist's book" option — one which present technology makes possible? Run off the pages on your laser jet; let Kinko's do your color imagery on a copier and add some touches of further color with pencils or watercolor; and bind twenty-five of them in heavier paper, and *voilà!* Well, aside from the fact that technically, an edition of twenty-five "artist's books" could be done for \$100 (or somewhat less if you are really cautious and clever), it is also true that the spirit and quality possible in the old fashioned "livre d'artiste," which is a crafted vessel for the marriage of text and images, would have been lost.

Perhaps it is to be expected of our quick-to-document period that the nomenclature which differentiates these two vastly different kinds of productions is even less meaningful and more confusing than that arch sobriquet "postmodern." After all, don't "livre d'artiste" and "artist's book" mean the same thing? Well, as we have seen, no; not in contemporary (postmodern?) discussions. The French term, which takes precedence chronologically, refers to the ambitious ventures commenced in the latter part of the last century in France and continued through

our period in all of Europe, the United States, and elsewhere, featuring the work of an artist, an "important" text (new or classical), a fine typographer, printer, and designer, superb paper and materials, and often a prospectus. "Artist's book" is the new term, referring, by usage rather than literal meaning, to a more "loving hands at home" copier and paste product, but at the very least to a cheaper, less production-value oriented effort, with the artist presiding.

Though my description so far smacks of prejudice, I would be the first to acknowledge that the "artist's book" has every bit as much artistic potential as the most ambitious "livre d'artiste." In fact, let us remember that William Blake's most inventive productions were very much homemade, and that the more polished books of our century, incorporating original artwork and featuring a linkage of specialists, can and frequently do fail from a surfeit of product and little soul. These matters are discussed in "postmodern" fashion by Johanna Drucker in *A Century of Artist's Books* (Granary Books, New York, 1995). Despite chapters with titles like "The Artist's Book as a Rare and or Auratic Object" and "Self Reflexivity in Book Form," Drucker gives good historical background for the present efflorescence of artist's books. By her defining descriptions as well as her own work, she reveals a preference for "the expressive tradition of the artist's book" as opposed to the "craft tradition of book arts," that is, the tradition of the "livre d'artiste."

When they work with artists, private presses must, of necessity, be committed to the tradition of the "livre d'artiste," for to do "artist's books" implies eschewing the capability of the private press. The talents of printers and craftsmen as well as artists are joined in the "livre d'artiste." For all the freedom of the "artist's book," the "medium" is without those rules which speak to tradition, expectation, and the exhilaration of seeing



crafts work together to attain art. If not supporting the text conceptually as the art message, the graphic and/or sculptural form of the "artist's book" often subsumes rather than features the text. The "livre d'artiste," however, is the opera of the book arts, and all its facets have to come together harmoniously to make it an unqualified success. To those concerned principally with the future of typographic press work, it would be well to consider the profound opportunities for reinforcement afforded both printer and artist by the "livre d'artiste" done well.

Clearly the fin de siècle bugaboo amongst many devotees of fine printing has been the specter of digital media, but it is my contention that the looming hegemony of the digital, like the earlier ubiquity of offset, is simply a change in the kind of fast food we are served. As fine press work has never been fast food, the digital is not what to worry about. In truth, its capabilities have even enhanced the way certain work is received and processed at many a small press. If artists and printers are to continue to produce notable "livres d'artistes," what is critical is that they must be alert to the need for keeping their efforts vital. What the world and curators don't need is another over-produced tome of little aesthetic merit.

In what amounts to a silent struggle for a fashionable position in the world of contemporary book art, the expressive singularity of the "artist's book" as opposed to the format-and-structure-restricted tradition of the "livre d'artiste" has found the most receptive critical response. But make a fine "livre d'artiste" and the admittedly limited audience will respond. I shall not name the few books which I feel qualify as outstanding collaborations that have come from California presses in the last fifteen years. Suffice it to say that such books have been published, but I believe them to be too few and far between. To those who say that they are too expensive to produce, the truth



is that though the fine press book which incorporates original works of graphic art successfully (successfully is the key word) will be more expensive, it will also be more salable.

Perhaps the best way to make the "livre d'artiste" a pragmatic undertaking, assuming it has aesthetic merit, is to limit the edition size to reduce the cost of materials and labor. I was once criticized by a curator for what he considered to be an absurdly small edition, which he attributed to a desire to enhance the value of the work. He recanted when the nitty gritty of the costs were spelled out. By producing a work for the audience one has rather than the audience one might hope for, one invests a small amount for a reasonably assured return as opposed to risking a larger amount on what can only be referred to as a best-case scenario.

The next time you see a "livre d'artiste" from a private press, ask whether it fulfills the potential inherent in its union of writer, printer and artist. How well does it integrate text and images? Does it have a distinctive cadence? Does the medium chosen for reproducing the art do justice to that art — e.g., has offset provided a quick and cheaper means for executing an image which would have been far better served by etching or dry-point? Does the paper chosen afford the appropriate support for the typography and images? If the book can be given high marks on most or all points, I might suggest that the most meaningful tribute would be its acquisition. If it seems to fall short, tell the publisher. As with opera, there is almost never a perfect product, but constructive criticism enhances the chances of giving birth to such a rare creature.



Joseph Goldyne is a Bay Area artist who occasionally writes on the arts.

Cover and title vignettes by Mr. Goldyne.

## Visit Us on the Internet

at <http://www.bccbooks.org>

Those of you who read the fine print on the second page of the *Quarterly News-Letter* already know that The Book Club of California has a Web site and may have visited it at <http://www.bccbooks.org> [leave out any character after “org”]. For those of you who are adventurous, it usually works with <http://bccbooks.org> [leave out any character after “org”].

The Web site has pages for the History of the Club, Library, current Exhibition, current Public Program, Membership, Grants and Awards, and Available Publications, both books and keepsakes. Using the Web site you can find out which publications are still in print for gifts to family and friends or to fill out your own collection. Remember, The Book Club of California now takes credit cards — members can be billed.

The Club has its own domain name administered by Slip.Net, a San Francisco Internet Service Provider. The Club no longer uses CompuServe for email — email should now be sent to [bcc@slip.net](mailto:bcc@slip.net). This is all listed on the second page of the *Quarterly News-Letter* — this copy of the *Quarterly News-Letter* has the Club’s URL on the cover, too.

If you have comments or questions regarding the new Web site, please send them to the [Webmaster@bccbooks.org](mailto:Webmaster@bccbooks.org) [leave out any character after “org”].  
— The Webmaster

## Seeking Books and Their Prices on the Web

David C. Weber

Do you at times wonder if a certain old or out-of-print book might be available today for sale, and where and at what price? Are you interested in the value of some volume on your shelf, or the possi-



ble market value of your books to some not-for-profit institution or organization? If so, the Web provides you opportunities.

There are more than the five current options which will briefly be described. In each of these, all one does is type in the author's name and/or the title of the book, perhaps add the date in the space provided, and click for the search. Displayed in seconds will be the hits. One may qualify the search by price, or limit the number of copies to be displayed. Each service has its features and nice points, many providing information about book fairs and other current events or links to other useful places in the used or antiquarian book market. Purchase orders are easy to execute; in the case of collective search services below, the order transaction is directly online with the bookseller. One needs to explore each service to determine what best meets the user's objectives.

Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America, by R. M. Harris, Ltd. (with address [www.abaa-booknet.com/abaa.html](http://www.abaa-booknet.com/abaa.html)) provides the online catalogues of 250 booksellers. In this case one must take the resulting list from the search and move online to each of the dealers to get bibliographic data and price for each copy.

Advanced Book Exchange, from Victoria, British Columbia (Web address: <http://www.abebbooks.com>) lists the combined online holdings of well over 2,200 booksellers. It also provides a useful glossary of the trade and book collecting terms.

Bibliofind, from Great Barrington, Massachusetts (Web address: <http://www.bibliofind.com>) has a combined database with over five million old, used, and rare books offered by over 1,700 dealers worldwide. This also has links to the "Book Auction" site of AOL, provided for U.S. and Canadian sales (its own address being: <http://www.upforbid.com>).

Interloc, from Southworth, Washington (Web address <http://www.interloc.com>), has a combined database with nearly four mil-

lion books, maps, autographs, prints, and manuscripts offered by over 1,800 booksellers. This site also has a public events calendar, a service for missing or stolen books, and many book-trade links to such bibliographic aids as dictionaries, the Wilsey glossary, U.S. Library of Congress, and the Research Libraries Group.

MXBookFinder, a new combination service started in early 1997 by a student of the University of California, Berkeley (Web address: <http://mxbf.com>), currently provides a combined search of seven online services with the search results listed sequentially within each store. The seven services now are: Advanced Book Exchange, Amazon.com, Bibliocity, Bibliofind, Cherry Valley Books, Interloc, and Powell's Bookstore. Beside those services listed individually above, Amazon has new titles, Bibliocity is a vendor network of small and medium-sized booksellers, Cherry Valley specializes in new children's and parenting books, and Powell's offers large selections of both new and used titles.

As one sample of what can be found, a search for the book *Typhoon* by Joseph Conrad, without qualifying by seeking a first edition or by specifying imprint date, illustrator, or price limit, resulted in the following number of copies then available

Advanced Book Exchange	52
Bibliofind	51
Interloc	42
MXBookFinder:	
Advanced Book Exchange	30
Amazon.com	6
Bibliocity	0
Bibliofind	49
Cherry Valley Books	0
Interloc	42
Powell's Bookstore	5



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## Exhibition Notes

The spring season began with the arrival of the crate bearing twenty-four books that comprised this year's annual Rounce and Coffin Club Western Books exhibition. Among the selections were eight books by the J. Paul Getty Trust. *Making Architecture: The Getty Center* showed in great detail the huge complex rising on a Los Angeles hilltop. Another, *Going to the Getty*, was cleverly done in a children's book format but was suitable for adults planning a trip. Two others, *Handbook of the Collections* and *The J. Paul Getty Museum and its Collections*, detailed the relocated treasures from the former Malibu site.

Northern California was represented by Asa Peavy of the San Francisco Public Library and his entry, *Anatomy*, from his Bullnettle Press, and by an unusual book designed by Christine Taylor of Wilsted & Taylor for the Jewish Museum of San Francisco, *L'Chaim! A Kiddush Cup Invitational*.

Southern California was represented by Book Club member and glamorous movie star Gloria Stuart, who submitted from her press, *Imprenta Glorias*, a book titled *The Portrait* by Don Bachardy, a study of his partner, Christopher Isherwood. Also, Regis Graden of the MarMichael Press designed Msgr. Francis J. Weber's miniature book entitled *Via Crucis*.

The exhibition for May and June was "Window on Japan: Contemporary Japanese Children's Books," lent by the Education-Psychology Library of the University of California, Berkeley. This was culled by librarian Mark Mentges from a larger exhibition at the UC Museums at Blackhawk, Danville, California.

The forty-odd books were broken down into categories: Traditional Tales, History Through Story, The Four Seasons, Discovering the World, Foxes, Daily Life, Images of Children, Landscapes, The Art of the Picture Book, and Books in Translation.

Although life in industrialized Japan today mirrors much of life in the urban United States, many of these stories for young readers show their roots still to be in Japanese tradition and folklore. The fox is a familiar figure in Japanese folklore, as are both heroes and fools, other-worldly beings, and people who are not so different from ourselves. The one common thread that runs through these books is the use of water color and simple brush strokes to convey a mood, thus letting the reader fill in part of the picture. Images of foxes, kimonos, stone statues wearing straw hats, high-speed trains, bustling markets, and city skyscrapers unfold before our eyes. They are all reflections of Japan, a country at once glitteringly new, yet steeped in its past. The visual and written pictures found on the pages of children's books spring from the minds and hearts of Japan's own artists, who share their interpretation and perception of the society in which they live. From these images, a vision of Japan, rich in history and imagination, emerges.

— Ann Hotta, Sonya Kaufman,  
Original Compilers

With the summer exhibition we honor the memory of Lewis Allen of the Allen Press. The majority of the works were lent by the Donohue Rare Book Room of the University of San Francisco through their new librarian, John Hawk. (We welcome John to the San Francisco book community and wish him every success.)

Items on view are original illustrations for the magnificent *Printing for the Handpress* as well as original wood blocks by Blair Hughes-Stanton used in illustrating *The Wreck of the Golden Mary*. Harold Wollenberg lent ten of The Allen Press books in exquisite bindings by Leah Wollenberg, past president of The Book Club of California. Thank you, Harold, for letting us see once again these lovely bindings.



The fall starts (August 31 – October 16) with a typographical show starring the work of Dan Carr of the Golgonooza Letter Foundry. This coincides with the October meeting in San Francisco of the American Typecasting Fellowship and will be called “Designs for an Integrated Typography: Punchcutting, Typefounding, Composition and Printing at Golgonooza Letter Foundry & Press.” Mr. Carr and his partner, artist Julia Ferrari, send the following details:

“[Metal] Letterpress, like wind powered sailing, has moved from the economics of necessity to the economics of delight.”

— August Heckscher

...Carr and Ferrari create a special typography for each book they design. They creatively integrate every element of cutting, casting, composing, and printing metal types with the text and visual images chosen for each book. Alongside their recent book *Gifts of the Leaves*, printed with Carr’s hand-cut type, *Regulus*, are included several books they were commissioned to collaborate on with The Limited Editions Club of New York. To be included are authors: Samuel Beckett, James Joyce, Joseph Conrad, Arthur Rimbaud, Ezra Pound, Louis Aragon, Pablo Neruda, Walt Whitman, Maya Angelou, Arthur Miller — and artists: Robert Ryman, Sean Scully, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Aaron Siskind, Robert Ballagh, Francesco Clemente, Jacob Lawrence, John Biggers, and Leonard Baskin.

Also during that period (August 31 through October 16, 1998), we will have an exhibition of the work of Gloria Stuart, star of the movie *Titanic*, but, more importantly, a fine letter-press printer.

This will be followed (October 19 – November 27) with the work of Peter and Donna Thomas.

The Christmas exhibition (December 12 – January 15) will feature early California children’s books from the collection of James Silverman.

— Jack Maclean

## Public Program Notes

On July 6, 1998, Claire Bolton of the Alembic Press, Hyde Farm House, Marcham, Oxford, England, spoke on twenty years' work of the Press — twenty years of having fun, as she put it. The alembic provides a wonderful metaphor for the work of a fine press, for it was the vessel the mediaeval alchemist used in his attempt to turn base metals into gold. The Alembic Press produces books about books, typography, paper and printing history, both miniature and standard size. A thirteenth-century farmhouse is home to the Press, and Claire and David Bolton do most of the work on their books themselves. The Boltons brought with them some examples of their work, which ranged from the elaborately impressive *Oxford Doors* to the tiny but fascinating *Te Deum Laudamus*, which uses type cast in Paris at the turn of the century for the Gregorian plainsong from the Sarum Psalter, and from *Frying the Flag*, a story by Lawrence Durrell, to *Specimens of Wood Type*, a large-format volume showing forty-six different fonts held at The Alembic Press. The Boltons will be at the Oak Knoll Book Fest, September 26 and 27, 1998, in New Castle, Delaware. We were delighted to welcome them at the Club for an engaging talk.

The speaker for October will be Peter Thomas (one of the few collaborations of The Alembic Press was with Peter and Donna Thomas of Santa Cruz); his talk will take place on Monday, October 26 at 7 p.m. in the SPUR Room, 5th Floor, and will complement the exhibit of the Thomases' work to be held in the Club's rooms from October 19 through November 27.



## Gifts & Acquisitions

The library has just acquired another important book, *D.B.U. and R.R.*, being a thirty-year correspondence, from 1908 to 1941, between Daniel Berkeley Updike and that incomparable wood engraver and printing authority, Rudolph Ruzicka. The volume was printed for the American Printing History Association in an edition of 500 copies by The Stinehour Press at Lunenburg, Vermont — one of America's finest commercial printers, as we know from the fine book printed for the Club in 1990, *A Typographical Masterpiece*, John Dreyfus's study of Eric Gill's *Four Gospels*. We have just learned, with great interest, that the Stinehour Press has been acquired by James Crean plc of Dublin, Ireland, but that the work of the press will continue in Vermont.

Much of the remarkable exchange of knowledge between Updike and Ruzicka concerns the annual New Year's card designed by Ruzicka and printed by Updike at his Merrymount Press. Unfortunately, only a couple of these magnificent color engravings and chiaroscuros are reproduced. Very fortunately, a large part of this work is on Updike as a scholar-printer and concerns his great two-volume work, *Printing Types, Their History, Forms, and Use*, Harvard University Press, 1922. This was reprinted in 1923 and 1927, a second edition appeared in 1937, and it was last published posthumously in 1962. This work was the result of his long series of lectures at Harvard's Business School on the techniques of printing. These courses, starting in 1911, provided the basis of this great book on printing, and Updike was prodded, helped, and argued with by Ruzicka with sharp intelligence and some eyebrow-raising comments regarding Gutenberg.

But more, considering the intelligent exchanges between these two incredibly literate authorities, we are puzzled by the "why" of Ruzicka. He was born in a small town in central

Bohemia and migrated to Chicago in 1894, where, at the age of fourteen, he apprenticed himself as a wood engraver. After working for a number of firms (engravings then were used in catalogues and newspaper advertising and were detailed renderings of clothing and any number of other commodities), he left for New York in 1903, where he still made advertising drawings for magazines and newspapers. Then during the winter of 1907-8, he joined the staff of the noted advertising agency Calkins and Holden. He and Updike were introduced by the bookseller Lewis Hatch, and thus began a long mutual relationship. But the great mystery is where and how Ruzicka acquired his complete learning in printing and the historical background to match that of the scholar-printer Updike.

Thanks to Barbara Land for the gift of this well-produced and absorbing book.



Illness has delayed the notice of an equally important book given to the library by the author, Richard-Gabriel Rummonds: his 470-page work, *Printing on the Iron Handpress*. To help the reader, Rummonds found an incredibly gifted artist, George Laws, to provide detailed diagrams, a great assistance to the amateur printer or even to the professional or semi-professional. To all this is added an index and a chapter on all the amazing books that Gabriel produced at his Plain Wrapper and Ex Ophidia Presses. There is also a long appendix of suppliers for all needed equipment. Coincidentally, Gabriel writes that it was Roderick and Stephen Stinehour's encouragement that got him to begin in earnest to complete this book. Thank you, Gabriel, for the gift of this book and for all the work and thought that went into its creation.

*Printing on the Iron Handpress* was co-published by Oak Knoll Books and the British Library in both paper and hard cover; it

may be had from Oak Knoll Books, 414 Delaware Street, New Castle, DE 19720.

— Albert Sperisen

The Book Club has recently received from the book's designer, Club member Jack W. Stauffacher, a copy of *The Gods of Man* by Carlos Efferson. (Publisher, Crescent Press, Palo Alto.) This book of poetry on Native American spirituality is remarkably well-designed in its type, suiting the varying length of the lines and the surrounding white space. The composition was by Francesca Stauffacher, Jack's daughter. We thank Jack for his gift of this attractive book of poems. Although the limitation is not stated, we assume that the edition is a small one. The price is \$20; for information, telephone 1-800-Book Log.

— Barbara J. Land



Our esteemed librarian often drops items off for the collection in so casual a manner that he does not always receive proper thanks. One of his most recent gifts was a charming booklet, *Gold Rush Literature: A Symposium*, compiled, with a commentary, by Oscar Lewis. Donald and Katheryn Fleming reworked the text from the winter 1948 *Quarterly News-Letter* to print this pre-Kurutz checklist for the 1988 Joint Meeting of the Roxburghe and Zamorano Clubs. Thank you, Albert, for this addition to our items printed at the Press of the Golden Key, Orinda, ably chronicled by Richard H. Dillon in the Spring 1997 issue of this publication.



Another stack of useful and interesting items from Albert Sperisen, all most appropriate to the Club's library:

*The Work of J. Van Krimpen: An Illustrated Record in Honour of His Sixtieth Birthday* by John Dreyfus, Haarlem, Joh. Enschedé en Zonen, 1952.



This careful study of the work of the creator of Lutetia and other esteemed typefaces is extensively illustrated. It will expand our collection on the history of typography.

*A Constructed Roman Alphabet* by David Lance Goines (David R. Godine, Boston, Massachusetts, 1982) is a fascinating and attractive book by the Berkeley artist and printer who is known for his stylish posters and sharp wit.

*Victorian Illustrated Books* by Percy Muir (Batsford, London, 1971) offers a useful chronicle of this large subject; it will add to our library's section on book illustration. Muir discusses a wide range of illustrators and traces Continental influences, American illustrations, and the chapbooks, annuals, and keepsakes of the era. The examples, from such artists as Tenniel, Bewick, "Phiz," and the Dalziels, to cite only a fraction, are captivating.

*The Grammar of Lithography* by W. D. Richmond (Wyman & Sons, London, 1878) and *Photo-Engraving and Photo-Lithography* by W. T. Wilkinson (England Bros., London, 1887) are two period technical books that will have value for those interested in the how-to aspect of nineteenth-century typography and book-illustration. Both are nicely illustrated with appropriate drawings and diagrams.

*British Fine Printing* is the catalogue of a 1984 exhibition held in the Church of St. Lawrence Jewry-by-Guildhall. It offers illustrated capsule histories of the various presses. *English Private Presses 1757 to 1961* is another exhibition catalogue, of even more scholarly interest. The work of nearly one hundred private presses, both defunct and active, was on view at The Times Bookshop in London in April of 1961. Our copy of the catalogue is number 41 of fifty copies reserved for private distribution.

Our Librarian's gift also includes memorial keepsakes for Sir Emery Walker and C.H. StJ. Hornby and two catalogues from Strathmore Paper Company of Massachusetts. From one of the latter, charmingly illustrated by Guido and Lawrence Rosa and entitled "A Venture into Everyday Psychology" or "Paper Is Part of the Picture," it is worthwhile to quote:

This failure of paper to speak for itself is due to no lack of eloquence, but to an incorrigible habit of speaking for its user. Thus, a dime novel printed on Strathmore becomes a two-dollar book. And, as has been pointed out by an ironic writer, a series of newspaper book reviews, collected and printed on Strathmore, becomes literary criticism.

Thank you Albert, for this storehouse of pleasure and instruction.



From QN-L contributor Wilder Bentley the Younger, we have received a tremendous gift: a 1942 wood engraving by Paul Landacre entitled "Laguna Cove." This captivating and mysterious seascape lit by a sinking moon was inscribed by the artist to Wilder Bentley, our donor's late father, founder of the Archetype Press. The print won two Library of Congress purchase prizes and was the twentieth presentation print of The Woodcut Society. Club members will recall the 1982 Magee Fund Book, *Paul Landacre*, by Ward Ritchie, an outline of the artist's life and work. Despite our limited wall space, we are more than pleased to have this print and hope that visitors to the Club will make a point of noticing it. Many thanks to Wilder Bentley for honoring us with this example of Paul Landacre's work.

— Ann Whipple

## The 1998 Oscar Lewis Awards

On the occasion of the presentation of The Book Club of California's Oscar Lewis Awards to Stephen Gale Herrick, Sandra Kirshenbaum, and Gary Kurutz, I was privileged to present the awards to individuals with whom I have had a long and enjoyable association. Although my remarks were extemporaneous, I have reconstructed them at the behest of Ann Whipple, our ever-diligent (and awfully persistent) Executive Secretary.

In the early 1970s, Gale Herrick was Master of the Press of the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco, and I was still a fairly new member. During that period the Roxburghe keepsakes were being produced as coordinated group efforts. Gale divided the membership up alphabetically, and I was to coordinate the “H” group’s project. One member of that group was known to be somewhat impecunious, so privately Gale sent me a check to be sure that no one would be embarrassed. As it turned out, everyone in the group paid the appropriate share, save the wealthiest member. When I mentioned this to Gale, he responded, “Use the check to cover him; someday, Peter, you’ll learn that the rich don’t always pay.”

That was my first encounter with the sensitivity and thoughtfulness Gale Herrick has always shown in his support of the rich and varied bibliophilic community and institutions of the Bay Area. Gale’s leadership and generosity have enriched virtually every library in the Bay Area, and his passion for books has extended to his strong role in The Book Club, the Roxburghe Club, the Friends of The Bancroft Library, and other major library and bibliophilic associations. His love of books and book arts is also manifest in his own mastery of the art of hand bookbinding. Nearly everyone in The Book Club has seen at least some of the remarkable, handsomely designed leather bindings Gale has created over the years. Gale was, in 1971, an active member of the group of local hand bookbinders who got together to found the Hand Bookbinders of California.

I first became acquainted with Sandy Kirshenbaum when she approached me at The Bancroft Library to use the archives of the Silver Street Kindergarten organization of San Francisco. Silver Street was the first American kindergarten and was founded by the author Kate Douglas Wiggin and her sister, Nora Archibald Smith. For a time, Sandy and I considered collaborating on a



history of the Silver Street Kindergarten, which was a major innovator in the development of public education in the United States. Sadly, neither of us had time to complete that task, but our association continued.

Sandy started an antiquarian book business, which reflected her deep devotion to books of all kinds. One spectacular collection she handled was a sizable family library of illustrated children's books. Because of my strong interest in children's books, particularly the works of L. Frank Baum, Sandy asked for my help in describing the L. Frank Baum and Oz titles in the collection. The catalogue caused a considerable stir nationally, for the collection was indeed outstanding. I remember the response to the catalogue because one of my friends in St. Louis telephoned Sandy to order a book that I had purchased just a few hours earlier (Sandy properly did not let me see the catalogue in its final form until it was mailed out). Minutes later, the man called Sandy again to order still another book; that, too, had been sold, and suddenly the St. Louisan angrily proclaimed, "You must have sold these books to Peter Hanff!" At that point the fellow called me to try to talk me into letting him have the books. I declined, and I still have them, and I wish Sandy would send out another catalogue of such great material. [Sandy interjected at this point that it was Gale Herrick who referred her to the family whose library had served as the basis for the catalogue, reminding the group how close-knit we book folks are!]

I continued by explaining that Sandy had moved on to a far more demanding enterprise — the creation and publication of the remarkable journal *Fine Print*. From the outset, *Fine Print* reflected Sandy's exquisite taste, her deep love of fine printing and typography, and her extensive connection with fine printers everywhere. That she was able to sustain and develop *Fine Print* through sixteen volumes reveals a great deal about Sandy's

intensive devotion to the book arts. The journal issues themselves serve as a magnificent monument of Sandy's accomplishment, but those of us in the Bay Area have an additional legacy from her: Through her generosity, the archives of *Fine Print* now reside permanently in The Bancroft Library, where they will be available for future generations of students of printing and the book arts.

Gary Kurutz and I have had a long and cordial professional association, probably dating from Gary's days at the California Historical Society Library. What many in the audience might not realize is that for many years I have apparently served as Gary's double! Warm and enthusiastic greetings at almost any gathering of book people are likely to be followed by an inquiry about how things are in Sacramento. After hearing this question repeatedly, over the years, I have come to realize that people think they are addressing Gary, so I usually respond, "Things are great in Sacramento and equally fine at The Bancroft Library!"

Gary's expertise in library management and California bibliography has long been legendary. His leadership in The Book Club of California and other bibliophilic organizations has been exemplary. In the 1980s, I was charged with revising the Club's bylaws and worked even more closely with Gary. The bylaws revision was surprisingly arduous because the Club's members are deeply devoted to the Club's purposes, traditions, and future (even if they don't agree with each other as to what those are). Because I had become steeped in parliamentary procedure, I unexpectedly found that I had an opportunity to help assure that Gary would be appointed Chairman of the Club's Publications Committee — the incumbent Publications Chairman had been elected President and could not retain a dual appointment! I have been more than pleased with Gary's now long-standing appointment. His outstanding work with the Publications Com-

mittee has revealed his blend of historic, bibliographic, bibliophilic, and bibliotechnic expertise. His accomplishment in compiling his monumental bibliography, *The California Gold Rush*, reveals the very qualities that argued for his appointment from the outset.

So not only was it my Presidential duty to present the Oscar Lewis Awards to each of these individuals, but it has been a special privilege to have been associated with each of them over the years — a privilege, indeed, shared by all members of The Book Club of California.

— Peter E. Hanff, President

## Serendipity

### *Musings by the Committee Chairman*

Free at last. Free, at last! Out from the dark world of toggles and type, platens and inkballs, comes The Book Club's *A Widely Cast Net*, an anthology of the writings by the Club's own legendary Oscar Lewis — selected by himself. Elegantly printed by Susan Acker, its graceful readings are a must, particularly for chronologically challenged BCC members who need No. 205 to complete their run of Club publications. \$90, please.

On March 25, the book arts received acclaim in the San Francisco's "progressive" *Bay Guardian*. "Books: They're not just for reading anymore," Emily Miller declared in a two-page article delineating artists' books that join form and content. Her inspiration came from a visit to Califia Books [284-0314; 20 Hawthorne, near New Montgomery], "the premier place" in the Bay City. While on artistic books, the July issue of *Biblio* features Bitter Bierce. How did it illustrate this article? Why from the Club's 1967 *The Sting of the Wasp*, of course!

Lynn A. Bonfield of San Francisco and Mary C. Morrison have recreated a remarkable domestic saga in *Roxana's Children: The*



*Biography of a Nineteenth-Century Vermont Family* [Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995]. Some of the nine children of Roxana Brown Walbridge Watts remain in Vermont, others settle in Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin, while a third group comes to Gold Rush California. Drawing on some three hundred letters and thirty diaries in historical repositories and private hands from the Bay Area to Peacham, Vermont, Bonfield and Morrison have painted quite a picture — almost as good as Roxana's California-born grandson, landscape artist Julian Walbridge Rix, would do. That, alone, makes this book a must — and the influential position of Police Judge Alfred Rix has no bearing on the above statement — even after recalling Mark Twain's contemporary comments on City Hall jail accommodations.

Intertwined lives make for enjoyable reading. Available yet for lazy summer days are two Book Club publications on the Norris family. First is Jesse S. Crisler's annotated *Frank Norris, The Collected Letters* (1986), which includes all letters in Franklin Walker's 1956 BCC compilation and adds new ones. As calamari lovers know, Frank Norris wrote *The Octopus* (1901) — breaded, of course, with Tulare County wheat and served with long, straight pasta resembling railroad iron. As a counterpoint to Frank's few epistles is Richard Allan Davison's 1993 *Charles and Kathleen Norris: The Courtship Year* [March 1908-April 1909]. Charles, Frank's younger brother, and his bride, Kathleen Thompson, were also novelists. Here are chatty, ebullient, loving letters between an aspiring writer in New York (Charles) and a San Francisco newspaper reporter (Kathleen) that produced a thirty-six year marriage. Davison's introductory remarks are alone worth the price of the book. Oh, price? Pick a Norris, either Norris, at \$85 each.

A real toe-breaker is a must for Californios in general and map aficionados in particular. David L. Durham has produced the monumental *California's Geographic Names: A Gazetteer of Historic*

and *Modern Names of the State*. At four inches thick, an equal number of pounds, and 1,700 pages, it contains more than 50,000 entries — pin-pointed by exact latitude and longitude. Celebrate the sesquicentennial by pulling out your Gold Rush letters written from obscure locales, and order from Word Dancer Press (8386 North Madsen Avenue, Clovis, CA 93611) at \$195.

To continue celebrating California's 150th, two other Bay Area exhibits are musts. At the foot of Polk Street sits the Maritime Museum containing "Found! The Wreck of the Frolic — A Gold Rush Cargo for San Francisco." On July 25, 1850, this fast brig, loaded with Chinese trade goods, ran aground off the Mendocino coast. Now, examples of its exotic cargo grab attention. Across the bay at the abode of BCC president Peter Hanff, The Bancroft Library struts its stuff. BCC member Bonnie Hardwick artistically fashioned a golden exhibit from a collection that Publications Committee chairman Gary Kurutz praises as "the mother lode of Gold Rush material." Don't miss it! With a half-dozen "musts" in the previous paragraphs, we are becoming rather musty.

We cannot leave the Gold Rush without note of our late June perambulation to the Pacific Book Auction Galleries to "fondle the Fardon." BCC member George Fox allowed us to gaze upon the finest known copy of George R. Fardon's 1856 *San Francisco Album*, the first photo book of any American City. We particularly eyed the salt print of Fort Vigilance, just down the street from where we work. Others admired it as we did. On June 25, the hammer price of \$155,000 tripled the catalogue's high estimate.

Three days later, San Francisco's twenty-eighth annual Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Parade strutted to the theme "Shakin' It Up." Coincidentally, that weekend, an announcement appeared for Malcolm Barker's *Three Fearful Days* when San Francisco really shook it up — to that 8.3 earthquake

on April 18, 1906. It is the third and final volume of Barker's trilogy, "San Francisco Memories," first-hand accounts of the Bay City from 1835-1906, and, like its 1994 and 1996 predecessors, is \$16.95. Buy all three from Londonborn Publications, P.O. Box 77246, San Francisco, 94107-0246.

With deadlines approaching and our composers demanding "copy," we decided to escape. Rather than having a fifth on the fourth and not venturing forth on the fifth, we stuck to water on our Nation's Birthday — but in the form of steam. We joined the Pacific Locomotive Association [510 862-9063] aboard their Niles Canyon Railway for an incomparable ride — and photo-opportunities — between Suñol and Niles. Browsing their gift shop — a boxcar brought up from the rail yard — we found Donald B. Robertson's amazing *Encyclopedia of Western Railroad History, Volume IV, California*. Crammed with maps, tables, history, and photographs, it is the one-volume reference to the Golden State's railroads. Produced by The Caxton Printers [at 312 Main Street, Caldwell, Idaho 83605], this 1998 work concludes Robertson's thirty-five year quest to document all railroads in eleven Western states. The desert and mountain states form the first two books, while Oregon and Washington have a volume of their own. Oh, and the source of the condensed steam that rained on me? Robertson reveals that the Quincy Railroad Co. bought all 119,700 pounds of Engine No. 2, a 2-6-2T, in December 1924.

— Robert Chandler

The Annual Meeting of The Book Club of California will be held at noon on Tuesday, October 20, 1998, in the Club's rooms at 312 Sutter Street, fifth floor. Members are invited to attend and to remain for the regular meeting of the Board of Directors, which follows lunch. Please communicate with James Nance or Ann Whipple at the Club if you plan to be present; they will be pleased to order a sandwich for you.



Last time, we called attention to the plight of U.C. Berkeley's Doe Library. Things are apparently looking up to some extent: Chancellor Robert Berdahl has pledged to increase funding for the library, and Stephen Silberstein not long ago announced a \$3.5-million gift to the library in honor of the Free Speech Movement. We learn this from the June 1998 *California Monthly*, which published a number of letters in response to the earlier articles by Professors Leon Litwack and Robert Berring, "Has the library lost its soul?" and "The Siren song of cyberspace." These articles aroused some vital responses, and we hope that promises of money and attention to the problems are fulfilled. One rather macabre note came from Stephen G. Miller, Professor of Classical Archaeology. He commented that the new underground stacks at Doe Library were to have solved the long-standing problem of space but have not really done so. He states that many more books have been moved to storage in Richmond and "the new stacks themselves are a constant source of wasted time and frustration. Since each section has as many as ten stacks that roll on tracks and therefore only one aisle (out of nine) open to those stacks at any given time, one is constantly either waiting for someone to get out of the stacks in order to roll them open to the desired shelves, or jumping out of the way to avoid being crushed."



The Shakespeare Oxford Society sends notice of an event which may interest Club members: "Thinking Differently' about 'William Shakespeare.'" This will take place on November 15, 1998, from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco. A play, round-table discussion, and reception with renaissance players from As You Like It Productions will present the case for Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, as the true author of the Shakespearean works. This possibility has cap-

tured the attention of prominent Shakespearean actors (Sir John Gielgud, Sir Derek Jacobi, Patrick Stewart, Michael York), Supreme Court Justices (Stevens, Blackmun, Kennedy, Ginsburg), and many of the world's most progressive thinkers (Mortimer Adler, Sigmund Freud, Mark Twain, Orson Welles, Walt Whitman).

For tickets and information, call the Society San Francisco conference hotline at (415) 522-9766, or write to 2130 Fillmore, No. 101, San Francisco CA 94115. Or visit the SOS Web site at [www.shakespeare-oxford.com](http://www.shakespeare-oxford.com).



Greatly exaggerated rumors of a demise.... Please note that the Club still has a number of copies of Gary Kurutz's monumental and very well received Gold Rush bibliography for sale to members for the original price of \$110.00.



The 28th Michigan Antiquarian Book and Paper Show will be held October 4, 1998, in Lansing; for information: Ray Walsh (517) 332-0112 or James P. LaLone (517) 332-0123.

## In Memoriam

We have learned of the death, on December 11, 1997, of Norman Neuerberg. His remarkable and varied career is affectionately chronicled by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., in the Winter 1997 issue of *The Branding Iron*, published by the Los Angeles Westerners Corral. Dr. Neuerberg was the able editor of the Club's 1989 *An Artist Records the California Missions: Henry Chapman Ford*, a book which reflects his active and lasting interest in the missions. Dr. Neuerberg was also an enthusiastic expert on the antiquities of Italy, which led to his appointment as historical consultant in the construction of the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu. A talented

teacher, linguist, and photographer, Dr. Neuerberg was the recipient of many honors for his work.

## Elected to Membership

### New Patron Member

John Hardy	San Francisco	George Fox
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### New Sustaining Member

Nicholas B. Clinch	Palo Alto	Joanne Sonnichsen
Edward D. Surovell	Ann Arbor, MI	Marc Selvaggio
Judith M. Taylor, M.D.	Tiburon	Axel Borg

### New Regular Members

Martin Antonetti	Conway, MA	Membership Committee
Ronald K. Apple	Novato	Richard Q. Praeger
Marie C. Dern	Fairfax	Barbara Land
J.C. Hubregtse	Amsterdam, Netherlands	Joanne Sonnichsen
Eleanore Ramsey	San Francisco	Andrew T. Nadell, M.D.
Felicia Rice	Santa Cruz	Earl Emelson
Casey Suzanne Walker	Nevada City	William F. Fry

The following member has transferred from Regular to Sustaining status:

Douglas C. Johns	San Francisco
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The following member has transferred from Sustaining to Patron status:

Mrs. Shirley Masengill	Oakland
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